

## Anaesthetic and Pain Management Department

# Managing Pain after your operation

This leaflet explains about pain relief after your operation and the painkillers you may be discharged home with.

The ward doctors will write a prescription for painkillers they will want you to use at home and you should take the painkillers as prescribed, at the prescribed intervals and not exceed the recommended dose. If you are not sure about how to take the painkillers please ask the ward nurses before you are discharged.

### **Paracetamol (500mg tablets)**

This is a very effective pain medication and well tolerated by most people. We recommend you take 2 x 500mg tablets regularly 4 times a day at 4 – 6 hourly intervals (Max 8 tablets in 24 hours). They are very effective for mild to moderate pain and work well with other painkillers such as Ibuprofen and codeine. **(Not to be taken with other tablets containing paracetamol such as co-dydramol or co-codamol).**

### **Anti-inflammatory painkillers- Ibuprofen / Naproxen / Diclofenac.**

These work by reducing inflammation and can be used with other painkillers such as Paracetamol and codeine. They are intended for short term use (1 – 2 weeks) and can be taken regularly. They can sometimes cause indigestion and so should be taken with food.

### **Codeine phosphate**

This comes in a range of doses and you will be prescribed a dose appropriate for you. You should already be taking paracetamol, and



## Patient Information

codeine can be used alongside this. It is good for moderate pain and is stronger than paracetamol. It can cause side effects such as constipation (taking plenty of fluids and some fruit will help to avoid constipation) and you may be prescribed laxatives if required.

Some patients may have other types of pain killers prescribed and you will be given advice on how to take these prior to discharge.

Pain following surgery should reduce over time and you should continue to take the painkillers until normal day to day activities are comfortable. The pain killers are not intended for long term use and you can reduce your painkillers as you feel your pain levels reduce.

Once you have been discharged home from hospital, if you have any problems with pain, you should contact your GP.

## The Pain Service

At the University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire NHS Trust we aim to provide the safest and best pain relief for all patients after surgery. To achieve this we have an acute pain service provided by a team of specialist nurses. The team is available weekdays to advise and answer any questions that you may have about pain relief. If you would like to speak to one of the team you can ask the ward nurses to contact us.

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format, please contact the pain management secretaries on 0247696 5878 and we will do our best to meet your needs.

The Trust operates a smoke free policy

To give feedback on this leaflet please email [feedback@uhcw.nhs.uk](mailto:feedback@uhcw.nhs.uk)

### Document History

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